Have a good break, Eagles!

The Eastern Echo

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EMU Theatre, audience unite for queer joy of 'The Rocky Horror Show'

Dylan Benson playing Brad Majors and Frankie Cramer as Janet Weiss in EMU Theater's production of Richard O'Brien's The Rocky Horror Show. *Photo courtesy of Wallace Bridges*

Frank Remski
Review Columnist

Review

A couple gets lost on a stormy night. They wander into a strange castle, hoping for help. Instead, they find queer and erotic horrors, mad science, and a jeering audience. All in EMU Theatre's latest performance, "The Rocky Horror Show."

A cult classic play and film. The audience has an unusual way of participating in it. Making snarky comments and jokes at the story. This was the fullest experience one could have with "Rocky Horror." Sure, one could watch the film alone, but it's elevated to a new level when one can see the cast's reactions to the cackling audience.

This was encouraged by EMU Theatre. At the show, they sold bags with participation materials. Some of the items featured were rubber gloves to snap during a mad science experiment, rice to throw for a wedding, birthday hats, spray bottles to create rain, and copies of The Eastern Echo to protect from the rain.

The actors had a unique challenge; don't break character, no matter how much the audience acted as comedians. Their subtle reactions added to the humor, at times playing along with the crowd, though never outright breaking the fourth wall.

Audience aside, EMU's cast did an over-the-top, humorous performance. The play would still be wildly funny even without an audience. It starred Gary Zelley as the flamboyant, villainous transvestite Frank N. Furter, Dylan Benson and Frankie Cramer as the unlucky couple Brad and Janet, Matthew McFarlin as a hot Frankenstein-esque creature named Rocky, and Isaac Cantrell as the turtle-neck'd narrator.

The cast delivered on the humor, giving performances grounded in their bizarreness. In particular, Zelley fully embodied the outrageous fun of Frank. The cast brought strong vocals to the music, making the songs absolute bangers. They also pulled off the sexual humor effortlessly, as such the intimacy choreographer Jen Pan deserves a shoutout. The commitment to their roles and connection to the audience made the show fully immersive.

Despite how zany the show was, actually because of it, it was a touching queer satire. "Rocky Horror" played into stereotypes around science fiction horror and queerness. By playing into homophobic and transphobic stereotypes, it subverted and satirized them. Sure, the villains may have been queer, but they were lovable and showed the lost couple, and by extension the heckling audience, that there is beauty beyond heterosexual expectations.

"The Rocky Horror Show" infused queer joy onto campus. Thanks to how interactive it was, it gave everyone with a ticket a chance to partake in EMU Theatre, and by extension the art of performing itself.

"The Rocky Horror Show" opened Feb. 14. There will be four more performances, two on Feb. 15 at 5 and 10 p.m., and two on Feb. 16 at 2 and 7 p.m. The 2 p.m. showing will have a pre-show talk with the LGBT Resource Center at 1:30 p.m. Tickets can be bought online or at the Sponberg Theater ticket booth. General admission is $20, senior is $15, student is $12. The show will be at the Sponberg Theater. It is for mature audiences only.

Frank Remski is a film and theater reviewer for The Eastern Echo. He is majoring in media studies and journalism and minoring in public relations. He has worked for The Echo since summer of 2023 and has written both news stories and opinion pieces.

Ypsilanti Community Schools will not willingly work with ICE, superintendent says

Odelia Florusbosch
News Reporter

Ypsilanti Community Schools will not willingly work with Immigration and Customs Enforcement, according to a statement written by Dr. Alena Zachery-Ross, the superintendent of Ypsilanti Community Schools.

The statement was released on Jan. 30, 2025, and details the school district's policy given recent powers granted to ICE through executive order by the Trump administration.

The Department of Homeland Security's Jan. 21, 2025 policy changes where ICE can be present. "Sensitive locations," such as schools, could now see ICE agents perform enforcement actions, including making arrests.

The statement announced that Ypsilanti Community Schools will not share student records with ICE or allow ICE into Ypsilanti Community Schools' facilities unless a valid court order is provided. All staff members are expected to follow these policies.

Resources for members of the Ypsilanti Community Schools community were also provided in the statement. These resources include information about how families can prepare for a potential encounter with ICE, people's constitutional rights in an encounter with ICE, and guidelines for staff members detailing what to do if ICE visits a Ypsilanti Community School facility.

"The safety and well-being of our students, families, and staff remain our highest priority, we will continue to take every step necessary to maintain a secure and supportive learning environment," Zachery-Ross said.

Ypsilanti Community Schools will continue to update their policies as necessary if more information regarding new federal and local policies relating to ICE presence in schools is released.

The Eastern Echo

The Eastern Echo serves the Eastern Michigan University and Ypsilanti-area communities as an independent student-operated newspaper. Founded in 1881 as The Normal News, The Echo distributes weekly printed editions on campus and throughout the surrounding community during the fall and winter academic semesters; and publishes year-round on the web. Contents are subject to copyright and may not be reproduced without prior written consent of the newspaper.

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THE ECHO MISSION

The Eastern Echo informs the Eastern Michigan University and Ypsilanti community by highlighting newsworthy content in a fair, accurate and timely manner.

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Print editions published Tuesdays from late August to early May are available in racks or on tables in all academic buildings on the EMU campus, and at dozens of businesses in the community.

Among those businesses are:

- Sweetwaters on Cross St
- The Golden Egg
- Domino's
- and more!

Want to have copies of The Eastern Echo delivered to your Ypsilanti business? Email advertising@easternecho.com!

CORRECTIONS

The Eastern Echo corrects mistakes. If we got it wrong, we want to make it right. Errors should be brought to the attention of the Editor-in-Chief by email: editor@easternecho.com

Weekly Calendar

TUESDAY FEBRUARY 18	WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 19	THURSDAY FEBRUARY 20	FRIDAY FEBRUARY 21	SATURDAY FEBRUARY 22	SUNDAY FEBRUARY 23	MONDAY FEBRUARY 24
HALLE FIX-IT HUB HALLE LIBRARY ROOM 115 2:30 P.M. - 5:00 P.M. SELF-LOVE & DRAG STUDENT CENTER BALLROOM 6 P.M. - 8:30 P.M. 	WINTER SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA CONCERT PEASE AUDITORIUM 7:30 P.M. - 9 P.M. STAR LECTURE: LOLITA CUMMINGS AND MELISSA THRASHER STILL HALL ROOM 124 6:30 P.M. - 8 P.M. 	EAGLE NUTRITION SERVICE'S COOKING DEMO RACKHAM HALL ROOM 105 5 P.M. - 6 P.M. HEALTH PROFESSIONS CAREER TALKS: ATHLETIC THERAPY MARSHALL ROOM 108 11 A.M. - 12 P.M. 	38TH ANNUAL STORYTELLING FESTIVAL: THE ARK 316 S. MAIN 8 P.M. 	"ARTS & ANIMALS" AT THE CREATURE CONSERVANCY 4950 ANN ARBOR ROAD 7 P.M. - 10 P.M. 		NEURODIVERSE ARTMAKING DROP-IN RIVERSIDE ARTS CENTER 6 P.M. - 8 P.M.

Scoop's Forecast

-9°	-17°	**Tuesday, Feb. 18**	
-7°	-12°	**Wednesday, Feb. 19**	
-5°	-11°	**Thursday, Feb. 20**	
-4°	-12°	**Friday, Feb. 21**	
-3°	-14°	**Saturday, Feb. 22**	
-1°	-4°	**Sunday, Feb. 23**	
2°	-1°	**Monday, Feb. 24**	

Remembering John W. Porter's legacy of leadership in education

Colae Eason
News Reporter

John W. Porter served as the 17th president of Eastern Michigan University from 1979 to 1989, and was the first Black president in the University's history.

Growing up in Fort Wayne, Indiana, Porter recalled a successful childhood filled with academic and extracurricular achievements in a 1999 interview from the university's archives. Porter was surrounded by supportive teachers and a principal who entrusted him with a special responsibility - ringing the elementary school bell, he said.

In the interview, Porter joked about ringing the bell being his "first school administrative job."

As a student, Porter was highly involved in school activities. He played the trombone, excelled in multiple sports, and was a member of the National Honor Society, all while maintaining strong grades and perfect attendance, he said.

"I don't ever think I had a C," said Porter. "I never missed a day of school."

His positive educational experiences continued into high school, where he found tremendous support from teachers and coaches. One pivotal moment in his life came when his high school football coach introduced him to Albion College.

"He drove me 68 miles from Fort Wayne up to Albion and spent the whole day with me so I could tour the campus and see if that was a place where I could go to school," said Porter.

At Albion, Porter left a lasting legacy, where he established several scoring records for Albion including most points in a game, a season, and a career. He was the first player in Albion's history to score 1,000 points in a career. Porter graduated from Albion College in 1953 with a degree in Political Science, and later became a member of the college's Athletic Hall of Fame in 1989.

"Albion was a great place [with] great people," Porter said.

Porter reflected on growing up in an era of segregation, particularly as an athlete, in the interview. When traveling for games at Albion College, Black players were often required to stay in different hotels than their white teammates, he said.

"When we went to the state championship in 1946 in Indianapolis, Black players had to stay in a Black hotel," Porter said.

After graduating, Porter faced a segregated job market. At the time, Lansing had not hired a single Black teacher, with the only Black educators in Michigan working in Detroit, he said. In 1953, Lansing sought to address this by hiring two Black teachers, and Porter was offered a teaching position while working as a janitor in the school district. Porter accepted the offer and began teaching in 1954.

Porter received his Master of Arts in Counseling and Guidance from Michigan State University in 1957. At age 26, he became the youngest person and the first Black professional employed by the Michigan Department of Education. Continuing his educational journey, Porter received a doctorate in Higher Education in 1962 from Michigan State University.

By 1969, the Michigan State Board of Education unanimously elected him State Superintendent of Public Instruction. At age 38, he became the youngest Chief State School Officer in the nation and made history as the first Black State School Superintendent in the United States since Reconstruction.

Porter became the first black president of Eastern Michigan University in 1979. He retired in 1989, leaving behind a legacy named after his plan for a necessary revitalization of the university - A Decade of Advancement.

Porter was appointed to his position during a time when the future of EMU seemed bleak.

"Somebody said to me that EMU is in crisis," Porter said in the archival interview.

"There were conversations in Lansing even about whether the University should close," said Donald Loppnow, an EMU professor of social work who was director of research development under Porter in a Fall 2012 edition of Eastern Magazine.

Porter spent the first four years of his presidency advocating for the university to stay open, according to Loppnow in Eastern Magazine.

"It was about demonstrating to the Legislature that Eastern Michigan University was vital to the citizens of Michigan and served the citizens well," said Loppnow in the article.

During the Decade of Advancement, Porter's administration increased enrollment by 7,000 students, leading to an all-time high of 25,000 total students enrolled at the university. Porter also established the College of Technology, the Olds Student Recreation Center, a College of Business in downtown Ypsilanti, and the first doctoral program in Educational Leadership.

Porter is also credited with improving the athletic programs at a time when there was discussion about EMU leaving the Mid-American Conference, including a MAC championship for the football team and a trip to the California Bowl in 1987.

Porter's retirement was short-lived in 1989 when he agreed to become the General Superintendent of the Detroit Schools, where he developed plans to stabilize and improve the urban school system within two years.

In 1999, a decade after Porter's retirement, the University named and dedicated the John W. Porter College of Education Building as a tribute to Porter's contributions to the educational field, and the John W. Porter Distinguished Chair in Urban Education was endowed for over $1.5 million.

After Porter's passing in 2012, the university held a memorial service to celebrate his accomplishments and the legacy that he left at EMU.

TVs displaying security camera footage in residence halls add a layer of security

Gabriella Payeur
News Reporter

At most gas stations, a small television displays security camera footage upon entry. Customers can see themselves and wave or take a picture. This lets the customers know that they are being recorded, thus deterring crime.

A similar system is in place in the residencies across campus. Upon entering a residence hall, students will see a desk managed by two students. Across from this desk is a small TV displaying live footage from four different security cameras. A second TV off to the side displays four different cameras. This system is in place in every on-campus residence.

Eastern Michigan University Police Chief Matthew Lige said that the residence hall cameras serve a similar purpose. He said that the the front desk staff monitors the cameras to help prevent crimes and problems from entering the building. For example, if a fight were to break out in front of Downing Hall, the front desk staff would see it on the cameras and call the campus police to prevent the fight from coming inside Downing.

Chief Lige said that in addition to prevention, the cameras serve retroactive purposes. For example, if a bike were stolen outside Wise Hall, the security camera footage would be used to find who stole the bike.

"There are too many cameras to constantly be monitoring all of them," Lige said. "We are not spying on students, just trying to keep them safe."

The cameras also serve practical purposes. For example, if an intoxicated student were passed out by the elevators, the front desk staff could see that and send someone to help the student get back to their room.

According to Lige, EMU chose to place the monitors across from the desks as opposed to behind them or in a separate room for two reasons. The first is that it creates transparency. The monitors' conspicuous location allows students and guests to know that there are cameras and that they are being monitored. The second is the idea of cameras working as a crime deterrent. By reminding students and guests that their actions are being recorded, EMU's Department of Public Safety hopes people will be less likely to violate housing or conduct standards.

Lige estimated the cameras were put in around 10 to 15 years ago. The monitors are updated when the building is updated, which is why students may only now start noticing them.

He said that the cameras were a product of a collaboration between students, dorm faculty and DPS. The campus had been having problems with fights breaking out, and those groups felt more security was necessary for the dorms. They decided on cameras and the monitoring system as a solution.

These cameras are just one of many security measures on campus. For example, Lige also pointed out the blue emergency call towers placed across campus.

Cell phones are the go-to for calling emergency services. However, if a student were to accidentally lock their phone and keys in their car, the student could use a call tower to call the police to unlock the car.

These emergency phone poles were also requested by students and staff, Lige said.

He said he is constantly looking for feedback from EMU's community and his, as well as the entirety of DPS. His number one priority is campus safety.

What's the move? Feb. 18-24

Carol Detary
Staff Reporter

Winter Symphony Orchestra Concert - Feb. 19

The EMU symphony Orchestra presents its Winter Symphony Orchestra in Pease Auditorium. The concert features Saint Saens' Symphony No. 3 and this year's concerto competition winner. This event is eligible for LBC credit. The concert is from 7:30 to 9 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 19. For more information, contact Chad Hutchinson at chad.hutchinson@emich.edu or call 734-487-2448.

Star Lecture: Lolita Cummings & Melissa Thrasher - Feb. 19

The Honors College presents Lolita Cummings and Melissa Thrasher as the guests for the next Star Lecture. Cummings, a public relations professor, and Thrasher, the director of media relations at Eastern, will discuss the podcast they created: "Enlighten U: Self-Care for College Students." The lecture is eligible for LBC credit. The event will is from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Wednesday Feb. 19 in Still Hall room 124, as well as on Zoom. For more information, contact The Honors College at emuhonors@emich.edu or call 734-487-0341.

Cooking Demo: Pesto Chicken, Garlic Pasta, Kale Salad - Feb. 20

Eagle Nutrient Services presents the next cooking demo in its series. Learn to make pesto chicken (or tofu), garlic and lemon pasta and creamy kale salad. The event includes tips, tricks and recipes for a well-balanced meal from start to finish. Registration is required for this event; tickets are available for purchase online for $8. This event is eligible for LBC credit. The event is from 5 to 6 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 20, in Rackham Hall, room 105. For more information, contact Darlene Bellers at eaglenutrition@emich.edu or call 734-487-6572.

Health Professions Career Talks: Athletic Therapy - Feb. 20

The College of Health & Human Services hosts several guest speakers in a variety of health professions including occupational therapy, physical therapy, orthotics, prosthetics during the Health Professions Career Talks event. Any interested pre-health students are invited to attend. This event is eligible for LBC credit. The event is 11 a.m. to noon Thursday, Feb. 20, in Marshall Building, room 108. For more information, contact Andrew Cornett at acornet2@emich.edu or call 734-487-9168.

38th Annual Storytelling Festival: The Ark - Feb. 21

The Ark presents its annual Storytelling Festival on Friday, by kicking off the Third Annual Liar's Contest. There will be six contestants. Each will tell a well-crafted, entertaining, 10-minute story that is missing the facts. There is a cash prize for the winner as well as a trophy. Admission is $20. Tickets are available online and can be purchased at the door if available. The storytelling starts at 8 p.m. Friday, Feb. 21, at The Ark. For more information, contact The Ark by calling 734-761-1818.

'Art & Animals' at The Creature Conservancy - Feb. 22

Mystery animals will be on display at The Creature Conservancy, a nonprofit wildlife educational center in Ann Arbor, during a night full of activities in the Art & Animals event. Local artist Mary Lewison will host a hands-on painting session at the conservancy. The event is for ages 21 and older. Tickets are $40. Pre-registration is required and can be completed online. "Art & Animals" is from 7 to 10 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 22 at The Creature Conservancy, at 4950 Ann Arbor Saline Road. For more information, contact The Creature Conservancy at info@thecreatureconservancy.org or call 734-929-9324.

Neurodiverse Artmaking Drop-in - Feb. 24

Every fourth Monday of the month, the Riverside Arts Center presents Neurodiverse Artmaking. Supplies and hot and cold drinks are provided for an evening of art projects. Donations of $5 to $10 are suggested at the door but not required. The event is from 6 to 8 p.m. Monday, Feb. 24, at the Riverside Arts Center. For more information, contact the Riverside Art Center at info@riversidearts.org or call 734-480-2787.

EMU's Ali Azinfar shares his Valorant esports journey

Joseph McFarland
Staff Reporter

As the first few weeks of Eastern Michigan University's esports 2025 season begins, Ali Azinfar is prepared to give it their all. A junior at the university, Azinfar is a varsity member of the university's Valorant esports team and is slated to compete against rival colleges in the Midwest. Before the first games are underway, Azinfar sat down to recall their origins and current experiences in competitive Valorant, and what makes them the player they are today.

Q: How and when did you first become interested in Valorant?

A: Originally, I learned about Valorant through word of mouth from friends. I began playing in Episode 5, started bronze, and worked my way up. Eventually, I began to get better and better, and I was thoroughly enjoying playing the game by myself. One day I was at the Rec Center, and I saw a flyer about esports. This was my first time hearing about the program here at EMU and it instantly grabbed my attention. I joined the Discord and the rest was history.

Q: What made you want to compete in EMU esports, and when did you join?

A: I have always watched esports growing up in games like CSGO, Rainbow Six Siege, and had just recently got into watching Tier 1 Valorant esports. I thought it was very cool to watch. I was curious to see what that experience would feel like. I heard that they were doing tryouts for a JV Valorant team over the summer, and I saw my opportunity to dominate and get my name out there. The tryout experience was amazing because I got to meet a whole bunch of people and learn so many new things. After showing my prowess in tryouts, I got a spot on the JV team, and I was solidified as the duelist of the team.

Q: What are your goals for this semester, for the Valorant team and yourself?

A: This semester, I personally want to exceed my current rank and be at the peak of my ability within this game. As a team, I understand the hurdles and challenges this semester is going to have us face, and I wish that we face them head-on with our best foot forward. To provide context, first semester we were in a league that was way too easy for us, and this semester we got put into a very competitive league in comparison to last. We also have a new teammate in Kami, so we have been trying to adjust to the new dynamic this semester.

Q: If you see yourself playing for an esports organization after you graduate, which one would you want to be in?

A: After I graduate, I don't really see myself playing for an esports organization. I want to cement my legacy within the dynasty that is EMU esports. As long as my jersey gets hung up in the esports room, I will be satisfied with the results of my passion.

Q: What are some tips and advice you could give others who want to be successful in competitive gaming?

A: If you want to be successful in competitive gaming, you need to be ready to apply yourself fully into whatever it is that you are doing. What I mean by that is you have to want to learn, want to get better, want to win. When the coach says something, jot it down on some paper, when you play solo competitive games, watch the video of that game and analyze what you could have done better. Do training for your respective game, and overall, never lose that fire of wanting to get better.

Those interested in the university's esports opportunities can find more information by visiting the team pages on the Eastern Michigan University website. Team schedules, current player lineups, and team applications are available on those pages.

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Looking for a day trip over break? Check out these spots

Carol Detary
Staff Reporter

Winter break starts Feb. 23 at Eastern Michigan University. For those students seeking to fill the week of no classes with something that won't break the budget with travel costs, Michigan offers a number of interesting places for day trips. All of these places are within a two-and-a-half-hour drive from campus.

Grand Rapids

Travel time: 2 hours and 15 minutes

Warehouse One Antiques is a two-story antique mall just outside of downtown Grand Rapids. The mall includes a selection of furniture, clothing, and other collectibles. The mall is open from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sunday. Find something unique at Warehouse One Antiques. Located at: 449 Century Ave. S.W. in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Also in Grand Rapids is the Art Print Pop-Up a free event set for the city's Downtown Market. From 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 23, visitors can peruse art prints ranging from framed photography, stationery, magnets, bookmarks, stickers, and more. The Market Hall has a variety of restaurants available to grab a bite to eat. Located at: 435 Ionia Ave. S.W. in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Lansing

Travel time: 1 hour and 15 minutes

Attend an event at the Wharton Center for Performing Arts. The group Peking Acrobats will perform the athletic and acrobatic skills seen at a Chinese carnival. The performance includes trick cycling, precision tumbling, juggling, somersaulting, and gymnastics. Catch this event at 5 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 25. Students receive discounted tickets starting at $19. Tickets can be purchased online. Located at: 750 E. Shaw Lane in East Lansing, Michigan.

If watching acrobatics isn't your style, try baking with the Sweetie-licious Bakery Cafe. Class participants will learn to bake the perfect pie from scratch. Registration is required before the event; tickets are $70. The class is from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Feb. 26. Located at: 108 North Bridge St. in DeWitt, Michigan, just north of Lansing.

Toledo, Ohio

Travel time: 55 minutes

Ice skate at The Ribbon, a 1,000-foot loop trail going through rolling hills and soft curves for a uniquely Metroparks winter ice skating experience. The venue includes a skating pond that offers a traditional ice rink experience for beginners. Ice skating sessions are 90 minutes each, reservations are strongly encouraged to guarantee a spot on the ice. Weekend times include 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. with varying times during the week. Located at: The Ribbon at Glass City Metropark, 1521 Front St. in Toledo, Ohio.

Visitors also might want to drop in at The Toledo Museum of Art, which has six traveling exhibits and 45 galleries from around the world to visit on display. Admission to the museum is free. The museum opens at 11 a.m. Wednesday to Sunday. At 2 p.m. daily, visitors can watch free daily glass-blowing demonstrations. Each demonstration lasts about 45 minutes. Objects are available for purchase after the experience and following a 24-hour annealing cycle. Located at: 2445 Monroe St. in Toledo, Ohio.

Detroit

Travel time: 45 minutes

Belle Isle Aquarium is the oldest aquarium in the country, located on Detroit's Belle Isle. The aquarium features a large, unique collection of fish including all seven species of gar found in North America. Parking and admission into the park are free, but a $5 donation is encouraged. The aquarium is open from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday through Sunday. Located at: Belle Isle Aquarium, 3 Inselruhe Ave., in Detroit, Michigan.

Also in Detroit, The Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit presents exhibits connecting Detroit and the global art world. Iin addition to a number of other exhibits, four temporary shows end at the museum Sunday, Feb. 23. Those four are: Chris Schanck: A Surreality; Levon Kafafian: Portal Fire: Shrine of the Torchbearer; Clair Gatto and Kara Gut: Magic Circle; and Asma: Wander and Pursuit. Tickets for students with an ID are $8; general admission is $12. Located at: Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, 4454 Woodward Ave. in Detroit, Michigan.

EMU beats Rockets during career night doubleheader

Jeffery Ellingsworth
Sports Reporter

With a hint of Valentine's Day magic still in the air, the Eagles were able to forget about the heartbreaking loss against the Ball State Cardinals in Tuesday's matchup by dominating the Rockets with efficient scoring and red-hot shooting from behind the arc.

The Rockets and Eagles faced each other once this season in Toledo on Jan. 7, with the Rockets taking home a three-point victory. The first half started quickly, with Toledo shooting two free throws 20 seconds into the game, but after that, it was all Eagles as the Rockets did not have a lead the rest of the game. Da'Sean Nelson (Toledo, Ohio/Robert S. Rogers/Kilgore College/DePaul) was off to the races as he scored 13 of his 21 points within the first 10 minutes of the game, reaching a milestone by scoring his 1,000th career point. Efficiency was key in the first half, as the Eagles shot 65% from the floor while keeping the Rockets to just 40%.

Jalen Terry (Flint, Michigan/Beecher/Oregon/DePaul) began the game with a layup at the 18-minute mark and never stopped scoring, much to the dismay of any Rocket who had to guard him. His speed and ball-handling abilities allowed him to put defenders in the spin cycle as he raced by for the score. Terry scored 19 in the first half, going 8-8 from the field and helping the Eagles take a 10-point lead into halftime. Jalin Billingsley (Cleveland, Ohio/Lutheran East/Georgetown) and Arne Osojnik (Ljubljana, Slovenia/Dream City Christian) also scored in transition and grabbed rebounds off the board.

The second half looked like the first for both teams as Terry's superb shooting continued. Toledo attempted to mount a comeback, pulling within three late in the second half, but they could never overcome the Eagles' efficient shooting display.

Terry didn't miss a shot until 9:42 left in the second half and missed just one more the rest of the game. His movement and the team's passing allowed Terry to get open and take high-percentage shots from the field. Terry played all 40 minutes of the game, scoring a career-high 38 points on 88% shooting while also pulling eight rebounds.

Head coach Stan Heath highlighted Terry's performance.

"I've seen some great performances, and that ranks up there," Heath said. "To be able to do that and do it efficiently, going 15/17. He only had a missed dunk and a blocked three other than that, he was flawless, and he ran our team really well," Heath said.

Eastern defeated Toledo with a seven-point victory and a final score of 80-73. Jalen Terry led both teams in scoring, followed by Da'Sean Nelson with 21 points. The victory brings the Eagles into seventh place in the MAC and an overall record of 12-13. With just six games left in the regular season, the Eagles aim to be one of the top eight teams in the MAC to secure a spot in the conference tournament in Cleveland, with an NCAA Tournament bid on the line.

After the game, Coach Heath talked beating the Rockets at home.

"They have been the dominant team in the league for many years, and we have been close several times and just haven't been able to close it out," Heath said. "We were able to close it out tonight. They made a great comeback at the end, but our guys were able to get some key stops and buckets that helped seal it up."

Catch the Eagles on Feb. 18 at 6:30 p.m. in the George Gervin GameAbove Center against the Miami RedHawks. The game will be broadcast on ESPN+ and the radio at WEMU 89.1.

EMU baseball swept by Pittsburgh in season opener

Hugh Thorp
Sports Reporter

The Eastern Michigan University Baseball team opened its season on the road in a three-game weekend series against the University of Pittsburgh Panthers at Centennial Park in Port Charlotte, Florida.

The Panthers ended up sweeping the series against Eastern. Due to the seven-inning mercy rule, they won game one 9-8 in 12 innings, game two 11-8, and game three 17-2 in seven innings.

Highlights from the series include a 12-inning first game on Friday, February 14, in which the Eagles lost by a score of 9-8. The Eagles were led by three players who had multi-hit games: Cooper Vance from New Waterford, Ohio; John Hale from Ashland City, Tennessee; and Bruce Jellison from Hartland, Michigan. The first two had three hits, and Jellison had four.

Vance and Hale each hit a home run and had multiple extra-base hits in a game where Eastern Michigan outhit the Panthers, 15-11.

Drew Beckner from Westerville, Ohio, was the starting pitcher for Eastern Michigan in the first game of the year. The ground-ball pitcher allowed just one earned run in five innings of work, striking out three batters.

Eastern Michigan's bullpen struggled. It allowed seven earned runs in six innings, and the Eagles lost the first game. Nick Keane, from Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, helped the Eagles keep the game going for three innings. He struck out six batters, allowing two hits and no earned runs.

In the end, Jack Topolski from Seven Hills, Ohio, would allow a walk-off solo home run to end the Eagles' bid of starting 1-0 on the season.

Game two was also offensively dominated. Eastern Michigan had 12 hits and went 12-for-37 as a team.

Four players recorded a multi-hit game for the Green and White, including Jellison, Harrison Travis from Soddy Daisy, Tennennese, Logan Hugo from Essexville, Michigan, and Kevin Krill from White Lake, Michigan. Together, they recorded two hits for the Eagles, totaling eight of the Green and White's hits.

In game two, Eastern Michigan had two home runs, including another from Travis and one from left fielder Ty Stecko from North Huntingdon, Pennsylvania.

The only other extra-base hit for the afternoon was by Hugo, who recorded a triple as he reached base safely four times in five plate appearances.

Tyler Kapa from Waterford, Michigan, took the ball for Eastern Michigan to start things off. In his first start as an Eastern Michigan Eagle, he pitched five innings and allowed four runs, six hits, and two walks.

The game was back and forth throughout the second game of the weekend. Eastern Michigan led 8-4 after five innings, and come the sixth inning, things went the other way for the Eagles.

Michael Pfieffer from Brownsboro, Alabama, and DJ Morand from Wilmette, Illinois, allowed seven combined runs out of the bullpen as the Eagles fell 11-8 in game two. The Eagles' bullpen allowed a combined 14 earned runs throughout the first two games.

Eastern Michigan had a rough game in game three. They lost 17-2. The Eagles had just four hits, one of which was a home run by infielder Connor Walsh of Mattawan, Michigan, his first hit of the season.

The bullpen once again struggled for the third game in a row. The Eagles gave up nine runs, and starting pitcher Bobby Jones from Loveland, Ohio, allowed eight runs, seven of which were earned. Eastern Michigan University dropped the third game of the series by 15 runs.

Up next, Eastern Michigan will stay on the road for a four-game series next weekend, February 21-23, against the University of Central Arkansas Sugar Bears. The first pitch for game one on Friday is scheduled for 2 p.m. ET. Due to the cold temperatures in Michigan, the Eagles are not home until March 21, when they host the Miami University RedHawks at Oestrike Stadium at 3 p.m.

Eagles lose thriller against MAC-best Ball State

Jeffery Ellingsworth
Sports Reporter

The Eastern Michigan women's basketball team took on the Cardinals of Ball State as part of the men's and women's doubleheader on Saturday, Feb. 15.

The Eagles looked to acquire their first MAC win this season, while the Cardinals aimed to remain undefeated in league play. Both teams look to get back on track after losing in the MAC-Sunbelt challenge.

In the first quarter, the Eagles came out firing as they made seven of their first 11 shots, quickly building a 7-0 lead. Elena Cabello (Malaga, Spain/IES Mediterraneo) led all scorers in the opening period with eight points off a quick layup and two deep threes. The opening period ended 19-12 in favor of the Eagles, with the Cardinals struggling to find shooting traction.

The slow shooting start by the Cardinals would not continue into the second quarter as they shrank the Eagles lead to just one after three minutes of play. Head coach Sahar Nusseibeh looked to the bench for fresh legs as the Ball State press wore down the starters. Sophomore Jada Williams (Williamstown, New Jersey/Gloucester Catholic/St. Peter's) was immediately impacted with a layup and two free throws.

At the same time, Senior Kyndal Lewis (Belton, Missouri/Belton) also contributed with a quick offensive board and followed it up with a layup. The Eagles and Cardinals continued in a back-and-forth battle that ended with halftime tied at 32.

The scoring for the Eagles in the third quarter came as a team effort as Olivia Westphal (Bethel Park, Pennsylvania/Bethel Park/Duquesne), Brooklyn Thrash ,Äã,Äã(Wayne, Ohio/Elmwood/Canisius), and Sisi Eleko (Montreal, Quebec/New Hope Academy/Canisius), all made timely buckets to keep the game close as the Cardinals leading scorers Ally Becki and Alex Richard began to take the game over.

The Eagles kept themselves in the game by finding the open man and hitting their layups, scoring 8 of their 11 points from the field under the basket. The Eagles lost their lead as they ended the third quarter down two, scoring 49-47.

The Eagles entered an offensive slump in the fourth quarter as costly turnovers and missed shots dashed their hopes for the all-time upset. The high-powered Ball State offense was too much for the Eagles defense as they scored 25 in the final frame. Free throws were the focal point at the end of the game, with 24 being shot in total between the two teams coming from 11 fouls. The Eagles kept it close but could never regain the lead as they fell 74-69.

Sisi Eleko, Olivia Smith, and Elena Cabello powered the Eagles forward, each scoring in the double digits. At the same time, Eleko led the team with 12 rebounds, and Cabello had a team-high three assists.

The Eagles will face Central Michigan on Wednesday, Feb. 19, at 6:30 p.m. at the George Gervin Center as they look to defeat the Chippewas in the rivalry matchup. The game will air on ESPN+ and WEMU 89.1 FM.

Eagle Sports Tips & Tales: Feb. 18-24

Elena Davis
Sports Editor

This week is packed with heart-pounding action as Eastern Michigan athletics gears up for a series of must-see events! Whether you're cheering from the stands in Ypsilanti or following along from home, here's a look at the exciting matchups and events you won't want to miss:

Men's Basketball vs Miami

The men's basketball team returns home for a crucial 6:30 p.m. game against Miami. This conference battle will intensify with postseason hopes on the line as both teams fight for a vital win.

Women's Basketball vs Central Michigan

On Feb. 19, the women's basketball team takes on Central Michigan at 6:30 p.m. in Ypsilanti. This matchup will be critical as the Eagles aim to defend their home court and continue their pursuit of a top spot in the MAC standings.

Women's & Men's Track & Field at Silverston Invitational

Both the women's and men's track & field teams head to the Silverston Invitational in Ann Arbor on Feb. 21. This all-day event is an exciting showcase of talent as EMU athletes compete against some of the best in the region.

Baseball at Central Arkansas

The baseball team heads to Conway, Arkansas, for a doubleheader against Central Arkansas on Feb. 21. With games at 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. CT, the Eagles will look to start their season strong and make a statement early on.

Women's Basketball at Northern Illinois

The women's basketball team will travel to Northern Illinois for a 1 p.m. CT showdown on Feb. 22. The Eagles will look to pick up a crucial win on the road in this critical conference matchup.

Tennis vs Findlay

Back at home, the tennis team faces Findlay at 3:30 p.m. on Feb. 22. The Eagles will look to continue their momentum on their home court and add another win to their season.

Baseball at Central Arkansas

The baseball team will return to the field on Feb. 22 for a 4 p.m. game against Central Arkansas. This will be another key opportunity for the Eagles to make their mark in this early-season series.

Men's Basketball at Northern Illinois

Later that day, the men's basketball team will play Northern Illinois at 4:30 p.m. ET. This game will be crucial for both teams as they strive toward postseason aspirations.

Tennis vs Eastern Illinois

The tennis team wraps up the day with a 7:30 p.m. matchup against Eastern Illinois. It's an excellent opportunity for the Eagles to show their skill on their home court and close the night with a victory.

Baseball at Central Arkansas

The baseball team finishes out their series against Central Arkansas with a noon CT game on Feb. 23. The Eagles will look to take the series with a strong performance in this final contest.

Women's Golf at Daniel Island Invitational

The women's golf team heads to South Carolina for the Daniel Island Invitational from Feb. 24-25. This all-day event will see the Eagles compete against some of the best in the region as they look to make their mark in the early part of the season.

Men's Golf at Lake Las Vegas Invitational

The men's golf team will compete at the Lake Las Vegas Invitational from Feb. 24-26 in Henderson, Nevada. This event will bring together some of the top golf programs, and the Eagles are ready to take on the competition in the sunny Nevada setting.

With so many exciting events lined up, make sure to stay connected with The Eastern Echo for all the latest scores, highlights, and updates on EMU athletics.

'Apple Cider Vinegar' exposes the fraud of Belle Gibson

Mariam Fakhreddine
Review Columnist

Review

"Apple Cider Vinegar" is a limited series on Netflix that premiered on Feb. 6. This telling of a true story about Belle Gibson features fictional characters and narratives. The series stars Kaitlyn Dever as Belle Gibson and Alycia Debnam-Carey as Milla Blake.

This series follows Belle Gibson, a wellness influencer who has claimed to have malignant brain cancer, which turns out to be false. She created an app called "The Whole Pantry," which consists of recipes that supposedly cured her cancer. These fraudulent claims led to her vast following on social media platforms and established a successful business that exploited people for their money. The portrayal examines the rise of wellness culture, social media's influence, and alternative medicine's appeal.

Highs

The highlights in "Apple Cider Vinegar" are Dever's performances. Her portrayal of Belle was strong and convincing, as was that of narcissism. The depth of her emotions were impressive and showed the true colors of Belle. In addition, Debnam-Carey's portrayal of Milla was powerful and emotional. The real emotions portrayed a young woman diagnosed with epithelioid sarcoma, a rare soft tissue cancer. Her journey was painful and full of hope that one day she would survive.

The series' plot was significant, considering it explores the dangers of misinformation. False information on social media can affect many individuals around the world. Faking cancer is a substantial accusation and untrue claim that can sway people with actual cancer away from the treatments needed. This plot is engaging and keeps the audience intrigued throughout.

The series portrays how Instagram was in 2010 by capturing the aesthetic and design. It shows how Instagram can be seen as perfect for influencers when, in reality, that is not the case. The reality of influencers can involve financial struggles, health risks, and the pressure to succeed on social media.

The bond between Milla and her best friend, Chanelle (Aisha Dee), is strong and meaningful. Chanelle becomes friends with Belle at the beginning before she discovers that she faked her cancer. She is this young adult who manages social media influencers' meetings and book deals. The emotional scene portrayed when she found out Belle had faked her cancer was impressive and strong.

Lows

There were minimal lows within the limited series. The accuracy of the events portrayed by Milla was misrepresented by the father of the real woman, Jessica Ainscough. The lack of background information and ending clarity on the legal consequences that Belle was facing was a low.

Belle's partner Clive (Ashley Zuckerman) was another low point, considering he never stood up to her. He would endure her mental abuse and narcissism to protect her child. He suspected her of faking cancer throughout the series but never did anything to stop it. This shows how he got manipulated and less capable of fighting for the truth.

Verdict

"Apple Cider Vinegar" is worth watching as it shows the possible consequences of disseminating false information. This show is full of depth and emotional aspects.

Rating: 8.5 out of 10

Mariam Fakhreddine is a film and theater reviewer for The Eastern Echo. She has worked as a news and features reporter for The Echo for two years.

EMU THEATRE SCHEDULE 2025

Cause Play - April 3-6*, 2025

School Matinees April 7 & 8* Suggested for ages 9+. *Accessible with ASL.
Journey back to 1996, when students Zuvi, Zipper and Aaron meet at an after-school Cosplay Club at Southwest Academy Magnet Middle School in Detroit. Encouraged by their teacher, the trio reluctantly comes together to create costumes & identities for an upcoming Comic Con. As their friendship grows they discover new things about each other, including some very surprising powers. The young heroes learn to work as a team to tackle a variety of problems, including catching crazy stray cats, defeating monsters, and facing fears.

The Girl Who Swallowed a Cactus - April 11-12, 2025

Suggested for ages 5+.
8-year-old Sheila & her friends feel like they're melting under New Mexico's summer sun and are so bored! To beat the heat and have something to do, the pals decide to create a fabulous fort made of the junk around them. The end result gets the attention of a very special coyote - one who walks, talks, and transports Sheila and her friends deep within the desert. The five friends embark on the adventure of a lifetime, learning about the impact humans have on the environment and becoming inspired to help all those who live within the beautiful desert landscape.

Moonlight 2.2
FunkyL0af
Comics Artist

ATTICUS! IT'S TIME TO MOVE YOU IN TO YOUR DORM!
OH- COMING!
ARE YOU EXCITED TO MEET YOUR ROOM-MATE? HE SOUNDS LIKE A LOVELY GUY!
I GUESS...?
I DON'T REALLY KNOW HIM.

Hard Hitting Question
Julia Bartlett
Comics Artist

You're resume looks great! We just have a few questions for you. Where do you see yourself in ten years?
Well...Probably found dead in a ditch outside the state lines long after my case went cold.

Engravings IV
Gideon the Ghost
Comics Artist

Engravings V
Gideon the Ghost
Comics Artist

The Rocky Horror Show

Against the odds of a winter storm, EMU Theatre held four performances of its rendition of "The Rocky Horror Picture Show." The erotic, mature audiences only show sold out multiple showings at EMU's Legacy Sponberg Theatre. *Photos were provided at the courtesy of Wallace Bridges.*